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## CIA Is Frequently Made Scapegoat Because It Has To Be Shut-Mouth

No institution in American life is sacrosanct, but there is a difference between responsible and irresponsible criticism. We agree with Senator Thomas J. Dodd of Connecticut that some of the attacks on the Central Intelligence Agency have gone beyond the line.

Baiting the CIA, Sen. Dodd notes, seems to have become something of a popular national pastime of late, and a dangerous pastime at that, for, as the senator points out, the CIA happens to be one of the essential elements of American security.

And there is something unfair and rather unbecoming about many of the criticisms. The CIA, for the most part, cannot fight back. In Sen. Dodd's words:

"Attacking the CIA, indeed, is something like beating a man who has his arms tied behind his back. For reasons of national security, the Agency cannot confirm or deny published reports, true or false, favorable or unfavorable. It cannot alibi. It cannot explain. It cannot answer even the most outrageously inaccurate charges."

The CIA is, of course, a human institution and subject to human failings, but the truth of the matter is that it is often used as a scapegoat by people who, for one reason or another, are unwilling or unable to look reality in the eye.

There are those who, for example, always have to find someone or something to blame for whatever happens, and the CIA is a convenient target (although, we must add, the State Department is usually even more convenient).

And then there are those who, when blame is rightfully to be ap-

portioned, would prefer to attack a handy whipping boy, like the "spooks" of state, than to attack a popular President and accept the possibly unhappy personal consequences of so doing.

Some people jumped on the CIA for the U-2 incident in the summer of 1960, when the real responsibility for that calamitous fiasco belonged properly to President Eisenhower.

"The buck stops here, on the President's desk," Harry S. Truman used to say when he was in the White House, and we think many of those who are so free with their criticism of an agency subordinate to the President and under his direct orders ought to have the courage and the integrity to blame the President himself when something goes awry, or when they think it goes awry, or when they claim to think it.

It may be that a joint Congressional watchdog committee ought to be set up to keep a sharper eye on CIA activities. Sen. Dodd seems to doubt it, but we part company from him on this, for in our judgment such a committee could function as well and as secretly as the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy has functioned and in an area of equal or even greater importance.

But we think the senator is quite right in pointing out that there has been far too much sensationalism, far too much inaccuracy, far too much scapegoating, and far too little sense of responsibility in some of the attacks on an institution which has had many more successes than failures and without which this country might be today in a bad way indeed.